



Office of Representative Heath Shuler

Representing North Carolina's Eleventh Congressional District

For Immediate Release

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Rep. Shuler Working to Allow Churches to Show Super Bowl *Current Law Discriminates against Churches*

Washington, D.C. – Representative Heath Shuler today sent a letter to National Football League Commissioner Roger Goodell expressing his disappointment that churches are being prevented from showing the Super Bowl on large screen televisions as a fellowship event.

“It makes no sense to me that churches would be prevented from providing a safe, friendly, and alcohol-free environment for fans to watch the Super Bowl,” Rep. Shuler said. “As a former player and an active church member, I have participated in these fellowship events and understand their value.”

Current federal copyright law is the reason churches cannot show the Super Bowl, or other event, on a screen larger than 55 inches, measured diagonally.

In his letter, Rep. Shuler stated his desire to work with Commissioner Goodell and the NFL to exempt churches and other places of worship from the screen size rules, as long as no admission fee is charged.

“Football is America’s game because, whether it is high school, college, or professional, there is a deeply rooted sense of community. From Friday night to Sunday afternoon families and friends gather together to cheer for their favorite teams, and churches should be able to offer their facilities to the community as a gathering place,” Rep. Shuler said in his letter.

Rep. Shuler’s full letter to Commissioner Goodell is below.

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February 1, 2008

Mr. Roger Goodell
Commissioner
National Football League
280 Park Avenue
New York, NY 10017

Commissioner Goodell:

I was disappointed this morning to read that copyright laws are preventing churches from showing the National Football League's Super Bowl on large television screens as fellowship events.

As a former player and an active church member, I have participated in several of these fellowship events. I know that they offer a safe and friendly environment for families and friends to gather and enjoy the game.

Football is America's game because, whether it is high school, college, or professional, there is a deeply rooted sense of community. From Friday night to Sunday afternoon families and friends gather together to cheer for their favorite teams, and churches should be able to offer their facilities to the community as a gathering place.

It is my understanding that the wording of current copyright law is the reason that spiritual communities are being prevented from coming together to enjoy your league's biggest game on large screens. It is my belief that churches should be exempted from all these requirements, as long as no admission fee is charged.

I look forward to working with you to address the laws and regulations that are causing this unfortunate situation.

Sincerely,

Heath Shuler
Member of Congress